

Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

BI-MONTHLY

\$2.00 FOR TWO YEARS

VOLUME 23

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1952

NUMBER 1

"The Crest and Crowning of All Good, Life's Final Star, is Brotherhood."

EDWIN MARKHAM

A GLOBAL CONCERN

"Savage and brutal treatment of a nation's citizens will be no longer a domestic question, but an international responsibility . . ." declares a Department of State publication of August 1951. Likewise has the matter of race relations passed far beyond the confines of local, regional or even national concern. Leaders in a number of areas on the American scene continue to alert other lay leaders and our population at large to the impending danger of indifference to this wider significance.

Francis H. Russell, Director of the Office of Public Affairs, U. S. State Department, declared recently in the December issue of *NAIRO Reporter*, "The nation was being judged daily . . . as two-thirds of the world's peoples measured American failures and successes against the claims of the Soviet Union. . . .

"What we do in the field of human rights, and particularly race relations, can be decisive, . . . The progress of the last century toward broadening American democracy must continue at an accelerated rate to satisfy the people of India, for example, that the United States was sincere in pledging equal opportunities for all racial groups."

In the same issue of *NAIRO*, Walter White, Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, stated, . . . "Unless the pattern of racial and religious discrimination and segregation in the U. S. is replaced by democratic fellowship, . . . the U. S. and the Western world stand the risk of losing all Asia and Africa to the U. S. S. R."

Walter P. Reuther, President of the United Automobile Workers, reflected his impression of the global significance of his area of human relations when he said in the *New York Times*, of November 8, 1951, "The question of civil rights was the most important single issue in Asia where 'hundreds of millions are in revolt'."

Dr. James H. Robinson, recently back from an extended trip abroad under the auspices of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., counseled that "The employment of a few American Negroes in United States embassies throughout the world was . . . the 'smartest and cheapest' way to defeat Communism overseas. . . .

"Since Communists undercut our democracy at the point of race relations, it is imperative that we send Negroes overseas to counteract their propaganda." . . . *New York Times*, February 10).

Dr. Liston Pope, Dean of Yale Divinity School, recently reflected the growing trend in leadership when he declared in the February 9 issue of the *Lutheran Standard* that . . . "Race relations anywhere have become the concern — the legitimate concern — of people everywhere. The so-called 'race problem' has become one of the paramount issues of our time; race tensions are mounting rapidly in Africa and in Asia as well as in the United States, and the future of our Western civilization may depend to considerable degree on our ability cooperatively to resolve these tensions." . . .

The Rev. Darius L. Swann epitomizes the potential human resources for 20th Century cultural bridge building. As a missionary serving the Chinese people Mr. Swann indicates that he became something more than ". . . the mere opening of one more door to the participation of the American Negro in the life of the church and the nation. It was, in a sense, our church saying to the peoples of the East that it recognizes the rising tide of independence and that it has no interest in the continuation of Western imperialism and the dominance of the white man in that part of the world. . . . The simple fact of my going could say more eloquently than words that the church recognizes the new place of importance which colored peoples are gaining, and that she has not set herself against it but seeks to understand them. . . ."

His experience in China has led him to feel that "Had the personnel of the missionary movement in China been less predominantly white American, the Chinese church might be in a stronger position and under less pressure and criticism. . . .

". . . Chinese indignation at racial attitudes in America is being turned, through skillful propaganda, into hatred. Perhaps the Christian witness and response of colored Americans might have helped to turn that indignation into more constructive channels . . ." (*The Christian Century*, November 7).

Citing the Far East's distaste for Western colonialism, John Foster Dulles indicated recently that "what happens in Japan in the coming months will be im-

portant in showing that fellowship is possible" between East and West. . . .

"Asia was waiting to see what would happen and much of Asia was skeptical that the United States could meet the test of equality. . . .

"Many leaders of free Asia," he went on, "feared that cooperation between East and West would subject Asians to an offensive attitude on the part of Westerners — an assumed racial, cultural and material contempt for the ancient cultures and civilization of the Orient." (*New York Times*, Dec. 2, 1951).

* * *

VIOLENCE

Opposing Strategy

Violence defeats its own ends. The present wave of destructive social behavior has called forth into action some courageous persons in the State of Florida.

They have committed themselves to a serious task. As the national conscience was pained at the reports of violence, so ought the national conscience to provide support, moral or otherwise, for those who are facing the issue on the local scene.

Under the date of January 7, the following telegram, from a number of religious and civic leaders in Florida, was sent to Governor Fuller Warren:

"We the undersigned residents of Florida are concerned over the epidemic of acts of violence against religious and racial groups in our state. We respectfully suggest that in addition to the immediate steps taken, you consider calling an emergency conference including ministers, educators, and others, especially concerned with human relations, to consider a long range program to make impossible a recurrence of such an intolerable situation."

This telegram was signed by the Reverend William R. Stephenson, Pastor, Union Congregational Church, and President of the Florida Council of Churches, and other residents of Florida.

— — —

Representatives of sixty leading white and Negro organizations in the Miami area met to lay groundwork for a proposed Dade County Council of Community Relations. The organization will have these objectives:

1. To anticipate and seek to forestall problems of inter-group tension through police education, through assistance and guidance to groups working in community relations and housing, through support of improved health facilities, through the encouragement of equal employment oppor-

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. It is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.

tunities and through the development of equal educational and recreational facilities.

2. To insure the utilization of sound research techniques to get at the roots, not just the symptoms, of difficulties in group relations.

3. To provide a two-way channel of communication through which the community may speak through a representative body to the Dade County Commissioner and through which the commission, in turn, may address the people.

4. To provide solid county-wide support for action by the County Commission in the improvement of group relations.

5. To use all public communications of all kinds for a general program of citizen education for a greater understanding and appreciation of the contributions, needs and problems of different groups. (*New York Times*, Feb. 3).

While the proponents of the above plan have taken a calculated risk, there are others caught in the process of social change who have virtually no choice.

Those Who Suffer

This news report is not intended to enumerate the by-products of social change. Realism demands, nevertheless, that we be cognizant of the impact of this type of social force upon the lives of people. As may be seen, the following four news items represent as many different areas of civil liberties or freedoms:

Minister Flees — Threats by the Ku Klux Klan have brought the Reverend Eugene Powell, minister of the Methodist Church (Fair Bluff, North Carolina) close to a nervous breakdown and have forced him to leave the state in an effort to regain his health.

The threats came from the Klan after a Negro quartet was invited to sing at a meeting of a men's club in the church. Despite the warning, the club asked the quartet to fulfill its engagement, but the invitation was declined. The manager of the quartet said a stranger also warned him against appearing in the church. (*New York Times*, Feb. 1).

Home Dynamited — From Cairo, Illinois, comes the report that: "The home of a Negro physician was bombed with dynamite, . . . and county authorities said the bombing apparently stemmed from attempts to admit Negro children to schools now attended only by whites . . .

Dr. Urbane F. Bass, forty-one, whose home was bombed, said that he, his wife and four children, aged five months to eight years, were shaken but unhurt by the explosion of the bomb shortly after 11 p.m. He estimated damage at \$500.00. Windows were shattered in a neighboring home. (*New York Herald Tribune*, Jan. 31).

(Press reports from several sources indicate that in addition to Florida and Illinois, bombings have occurred in North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Texas).

Candidate Threatened — A 60-year old Negro grocer has withdrawn from the Democratic primary race for town council in Gaffney, South Carolina, after receiving a letter he said was signed "K.K.K." C.L.C.

The grocer said the letter, postmarked in Gaffney . . . bore the letterhead, "In-

visible Empire Association of Carolinas Klans of the Ku Klux Klan." He said it warned him that . . . "It is not customary, as you know, for the colored race of South Carolina to hold public office . . . Now is the time you should realize your defeat and let withdrawal before February 12 be your protection for now and hereafter." (*New York Times*, February 12).

Irvin Convicted — An all-white jury that deliberated one hour and twenty-three minutes, in Ocala, Florida, found Walter Lee Irvin, last of the defendants in the case, guilty of criminally assaulting Mrs. Norma Padgett, 19, a white farm wife, near Groveland, Florida, on July 16, 1949. Irvin, whose original conviction was reversed unanimously last April by the United States Supreme Court, was sentenced to the electric chair by Circuit Court Judge Truman G. Futch, who also presided at the first trial. His attorneys said they were considering an appeal but, under Florida law, would first file a motion for a third trial. (*New York Times*, February 15).

Behind the Scenes

The Ku Klux Klan is recruiting new members in Florida. . . .

The Grand Dragons, Great Titans, Kludds, Kolkans and lesser Klansmen have been branded as "hooded hoodlums and sheeted jerks," by Florida's Governor Fuller Warren. . . .

But still the Klansmen are trying to build up the "invisible empire" which once spread fear throughout the South with beatings, floggings and murders by groups of men who took the law into their own hands . . .

Two years ago, the leaders of three Southern Klan groups met in Jacksonville. They formed a combine against what they called "hate movements" such as Communism. . . .

The leaders issued a statement calling for "militant action" against the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States, B'nai B'rith, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. . . . (*Indianapolis Star*, January 6).

* * *

HOW FREE IS FREE?

Theory

Californians working to improve human relations in 1952 will find their task sharpening in its emphasis against the current racist extremist elements in the state. One of these elements is the group headquartered in southern California, called America Plus, Inc., 124 West Fourth St., Los Angeles.

This organization was started by Senator Jack B. Tenney and Aldrich Blake of Laguna Beach. Among the purposes of America Plus is a proposed initiative measure that would make discrimination legal, under the misleading title of "freedom of choice." This measure, if passed, would amend the California Constitution to abrogate Sections 51-54 of the California Civil Code, allowing owners of places of public accommodation to choose their own patrons; would prevent any fair employment practice legislation; and would allow neighborhood groups to choose their own neighbors.

To qualify for the ballot, this initiative must have 305,000 verified voters' signatures. Morgan Keaton's California Initiative and Referendum Bureau, . . . has been retained to secure these names at the cost of 50c each. . . .

The backers of the measure suggest that "freedom of choice" is an American custom and therefore should be expressed in law. They say everyone, regardless of race, creed or color, should have the right to choose his own customers, his own employees, and his own neighbors. . . .

The tension and distrust among all people that will be caused by the initiative campaign cannot be minimized. If the "freedom of choice" amendment becomes law, it will be years before Californians recover from the incitement to intolerance, and the fears, hates and suspicions that will be generated among the people. . . . (*Blueprint for Action*, Vol. II. No. 1, Jan. 28).

Practice

As to just how the above plan for "freedom of choice," might work out, a report is presented from the *New York Times*, February 18, under the picture caption of "Chinese Airline Mechanic Loses Bet on Democracy."

"A wave of indignation arose today over the exclusion by secret ballot, of the Sing Sheng family from the Southwood residential district of South San Francisco, an industrial suburb.

"The indignation was given tangible form in eleven offers of homes to Mr. Sheng, 26 year old former intelligence officer with the Chinese Nationalist army, whose wife is American born.

"Mr. Sheng's down payment on a house there, met organized resistance, and he suggested the novel solution of the secret ballot. Yesterday the mailed ballots were counted. The tally showed that 174 'objected to this family moving in,' 28 approved, and 14 had no opinion.

"Sing Sheng said that, 'I was sure everybody believed in democracy.'

"A spontaneous reaction greeted the news. Veterans fresh from the fighting in Korea were loudest. J. K. Weil, who hails from Georgia, telephoned the *San Francisco Chronicle* from his cot at Letterman Army Hospital in the Presidio, . . . I lost all my prejudices fighting with Chinese and Negroes in Korea, . . . I also lost a leg in Korea. What were we fighting for? This sort of thing burns me up. All the other fellows in the ward, just back from Korea, are burned up too."

"The Reverend Robert Moon, a Congregationalist pastor, telephoned a statement penned jointly with his neighbor, Rabbi Saul White, president of the Board of Rabbis of Northern California.

"We deplore this manifestation of intolerance and bigotry because it plays into the hands of the enemies of Democracy who will claim that our professions of equality and justice are a deception and a snare. . . . We deplore it the more because it is a denial of the basic religious truth of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

"The busiest telephone in town was that of Mr. Sheng. All day long persons called to voice their concern and indigna-

tion, and to offer homes for sale. A man in Wichita, Kansas, telephoned and begged the Sheng family to come to Wichita . . . A similar call came from Indianapolis. . . .

"One Southwood homeowner, reminded after yesterday's balloting of the Supreme Court ruling on restrictive covenants, dismissed this point with the comment that, 'The Supreme Court ruling doesn't apply in California'."

(We would venture the opinion that the spontaneity of reaction of people from various parts of our country has not only taken the edge from Mr. Sheng's loss, but has also provided the local community with a rather revealing picture of their choice by ballot.)

* * *

EDUCATION

Public Schools — Here

A Supreme Court ruling on segregation of white and Negro children in public schools was postponed when the court asked for further details on the matter.

The delay may put off a decision by the court until the next term, well beyond the national political conventions of July and the ensuing Presidential campaigns.

The court acted through a short, unsigned opinion stating that a Federal District Court in South Carolina had not given its views on a report as to whether "substantially equal" educational facilities had been furnished to Negro students.

The Supreme Court held that it should have "the benefit of the views of the district court upon the additional facts brought to the attention of that court." Accordingly, the case was returned to South Carolina for further proceedings.

Although the Supreme Court acted on the South Carolina case, it passed unnoticed, at least for the present, a similar situation in Kansas. This controversy involves public schools in Topeka, a special three-judge court having failed to declare segregation unconstitutional. . . . (New York Times, January 29).

— — —

A group of Negro parents won a victory in the Supreme Court . . . in their fight against segregation in District of Columbia schools.

The parents had applied unsuccessfully in Federal District Court here for the establishment of a special three-judge tribunal to hear their complaint.

The high court gave District Judges Walter M. Bastian and Matthew F. McGuire thirty days to show why such special court should not be set up. The lower court judges had dismissed the case last spring.

The case centers around the refusal of school authorities to admit four Negro children to Sousa Junior High School, which is for whites only.

The parents did not contend that the new Douglas Junior High School for colored children was inferior to Sousa. They based their case on the flat contention that the segregation of school children on the basis of race was unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court declined . . . to review a decision that the Pleasant Grove Independent School District of Dallas County, Texas, need not provide a grade school for Negro children within the district.

Negro children of the district now are taken three and a half miles by bus to a school in the Dallas Independent School District.

Three taxpayers of the Pleasant Grove District had sued to force the building of a Negro school in their district. The Court of Civil Appeals, Seventh Supreme Judicial District of Texas, had ruled against them. (New York Times, October 9).

Justice is the bread of the nation; it is always hungry for it.

Chateaubriand

— — —

Nine members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People were arrested . . . on charges of conspiring to force Negro children to attend Cairo, Illinois' all-white schools. . . .

The warrants were issued after an outbreak of violence in which the home of Dr. Urbane F. Bass, a Negro physician, was bombed the night of January 29. Two nights earlier crosses were burned in a Negro neighborhood. . . .

Those named in the warrants were all Negroes except David V. Lasten, an attorney. . . .

Authorities said applications had been made for the transfer of about eighty Negro children to white schools, and about twenty had been transferred. Mr. Lasten charged that school officials have purposely delayed the transfers to embarrass the few children who did gain admittance and to discourage others from applying. . . . (New York Times, Feb. 8).

Public Schools — There

The United States reported to the United Nations (recently) that Hawaii's nonsegregated school system had made an "important contribution" to racial harmony in the island territory.

The account of educational progress in Hawaii was made in a new United States report appraising the extent to which human rights were observed in Alaska, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam and American Samoa. . . .

Under the Hawaiian school system the United States report held *any youngster regardless of race attends a neighborhood public school. This arrangement, it went on to say, helped foster a "sense of common citizenship" among a people of many races and cultures.* (emphasis supplied) (New York Times, Nov. 16, 1951).

Colleges

Frank Laraway, 18 years old, of Fairhope, Alabama, has become the first white student from Alabama to enroll in Talladega College, a school, primarily for the education of Negroes.

Dr. A. D. Beittel, the president of the college, said young Laraway was living in a dormitory with other students, all of

whom are Negroes. He said that Talladega, founded in 1867 by the American Missionary Association, had had many white students, including the children of some faculty members, and students from other states, but that young Laraway is the first white student from this state.

The school's charter provides that no student "shall be debarred because of race or color." Its enrollment is 300. It has a mixed faculty, about one-third white.

Young Laraway is the son of W. F. Laraway, a carpenter, who has lived in Fairhope for thirty years. (New York Times, February 4).

* * *

RELIGION

Schools

Two recent appointments of Negro professional educators to formerly all-white faculties are of special note.

Appointment of the first colored instructor to hold a full-time position at Drew University, Madison, N. J. was recently announced by President Fred G. Holloway.

He is Dr. George Kelsey of Madison who joined the theological faculty as associate Professor of Christian Ethics on February 1, 1952. . . .

To accept the post at Drew, Dr. Kelsey is resigning a position as associate director of field administration for the National Council of Churches of Christ. He joined the staff of the Federal Council of Churches four years ago in the same capacity. (Afro-American, Feb. 2).

Mrs. Ella Pearson Mitchell of Berkeley, California, has been appointed to the faculty of the Berkeley Baptist Divinity School and has assumed her work as instructor in child psychology, education, and religion.

Churches

Readers of the I.N.S. will remember an article in the END-OF-YEAR 1950 issue, entitled "Up New England Way", in which it was reported that the Reverend Roland T. Heacock, Negro, had accepted the pastorate of Staffordville (Conn.) Congregational Church.

The Connecticut Church Councilor, January, 1952, carries a report, written at the request of its editor, by Mr. Heacock. He writes:

"After a year as pastor of an all-white parish in Staffordville, Connecticut, I am glad to be able to report that our church is in a spiritually healthy condition, has improved financially, and to the best of my knowledge has not lost a single member because the pastor is a Negro. Twenty-one new members were received into the membership of the church in the past year and others are pending . . . The spirit of the church is excellent, and the pastor has received nothing but the most whole-hearted cooperation from the people of the church and community."

— — —

"All races" will be admitted to services and church membership by the Negro

Baptist congregations of Columbia, S. C., according to a recent vote of the Negro Baptist ministers in the city. (*Light*, January 1952).

Bishop D. Ward Nichols of the First Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, . . . called on churchmen of all faiths to unite for "the complete elimination of the . . . practice of racial segregation and Jim Crow from the life of America, much of it right in New York City." (*Afro-American*, February 2).

Segregated Worship Voted Out

The Norfolk Virginia Minister's Association voted unanimously today to abolish racial segregation at next year's united preaching mission there.

The action was taken on the recommendation of the association's executive committee, which said:

"If the association desires to participate in a 1953 Norfolk united preaching mission it shall be planned from the very beginning, and in all developing procedure, as an interracial project. The Negro ministers of the city will be asked to cooperate in the sponsoring of and planning of, the 1953 mission."

Before the ministers voted, a statement from the executive committee was read. It said, "For several years the Norfolk Ministers Association has been concerned about this matter of segregation at religious services, because we believe that segregation is incompatible with the Christian Gospel. We feel that this situation can be remedied only by individuals becoming converted to the Christian way of living and thinking." (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Feb. 2).

* * *

PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF

Local action groups can be highly influential in efforts to achieve democratic ideals at the local levels. Mrs. Mary Church Terrell, Chairman of the Coordinating Committee for the Enforcement of (Washington) D. C. Anti-Discrimination Laws, reports that on:

February 19, 1951: Hecht's (a Washington, D. C. store) published a Brotherhood Week Ad.

February 26, 1951: An inter-faith committee met with Hecht's to request a practical application of their published racial policy at their own lunch counter.

April, 1951: The Hecht Co., closed all further negotiations, stating flatly that they would not change their policy of discrimination at the lunch counter.

May 1, 1951: A boycott of Hecht's was declared by the Coordinating Committee.

June, 1951: Weekly "sitdowns" at the lunch counter were conducted.

July 20, 1951: Picketing was begun and continued for 6 months.

January 14, 1952: The Hecht Co., changed its policy of segregation at its lunch counter climaxing an 11-month campaign by the Coordinating Committee.

Three picket lines a week were conducted for six months, with volunteer pickets from churches, civic associations, labor unions and . . . of other organizations. A total of 100,000 leaflets was distributed from the line. Over \$1500 was contributed in small donations to help the work. (*Mimeographed Report of Coordinating Committee for the Enforcement of the D. C. Anti-Discrimination Laws.*)

ANALYSIS —

Short Form

A news dispatch from Washington calls attention to the fact that there are 13,565 persons in the United States Indian Affairs Bureau, supervising and controlling the lives of about 400,000 Indians. This means about one bureaucrat for 30 Indians. Pity the poor Indian. No wonder he is having a hard time.

A Navajo, speaking on the state of the world, remarked: "Too many chiefs — not enough Indians." (*Indian Highways*, December 1951).

IN THE NEWS . . .

To those who are in constant search of a rise in the temperature of democracy, we submit the following advances in the breakdown of segregation in the South.

In the last national elections, about 750,000 Negroes voted; it is estimated that 1,500,000 will vote in 1952.

A thousand Negro students attended white colleges in the South this past year.

All Baptist schools of theology in the South are now open to Negroes.

Catholic schools on college and graduate level in the South are now open to Negroes.

In Kentucky, many private colleges as well as state schools are accepting Negro students.

There are now Negro members on a number of civic boards in various Southern cities.

The public library in Louisville, Kentucky, and public libraries in several Southern cities are now open to citizens, regardless of color.

In the District of Columbia and every state in the Union except Georgia, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia, Negro

graduate nurses are fully integrated into the state branches of the American Nurses Association. (*Labor Reports*, December, 1951).

"LIVING WITHOUT HATE"

An indispensable message for all who wish to improve human relations wherever they are, will be received from the reading of "Living Without Hate," by Alfred J. Marrow and published by Harper and Brothers, 1951.

The author has illustrated how the goodwill potential of any community or group setting may be tapped and channeled into constructive action. He has compiled several case situations which are exemplary of how to keep time and effort from going to waste when tackling problems of human relations. Marrow describes and documents the process of changing a flow of socially destructive forces into a constructive potential for the entire community. The problem of awakening adults from civic lethargy to community action, as well as the problem of providing socially constructive outlets for the expansive energy of youth is admirably treated.

Whether one is working in human relations at the national or local level, he will find basic techniques of group dynamics adapted to problems similar to his own.

Alben W. Barkley, Vice President of the United States, declares, "Dr. Marrow not only points the way but holds out great hope for what can be done successfully to eliminate hatred among people everywhere. . . ."

* * *

Note: Rising costs of production have made it necessary for our printer to increase the cost of the **INTERRACIAL NEWS SERVICE** by approximately ten per cent. On the other hand, our printer has permitted an enlargement of the page size which begins with this issue. For the time being there will be no advance in the cost of the INS to our readers. (EDITORS).

Published by the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, Division of Christian Life and Work, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Editors: J. Oscar Lee, Thomas C. Allen and Alfred S. Kramer.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE
CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.
DEPARTMENT OF RACIAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS
297 Fourth Ave. New York 10, N. Y.
Return Postage Guaranteed

Sec. 34.66 P.L.&R.
U. S. Postage
PAID
New York, N. Y.
Permit No. 14717